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State Agencies Recognize Achievements in Affordable Housing and Community Development at Statewide Conference

The Indiana Statewide Conference on Housing and Community Economic Development today presented six awards for excellence in affordable housing and community development. The conference is hosted jointly by the Indiana Coalition on Hunger and Homeless Issues (ICHHI), the Indiana Association for Economic Development (IACED), and the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA), and features representatives from the housing industry, community development organizations, homeless servicers, and many other advocates and affordable service providers.

“This statewide conference provides opportunities for community development leaders to come together and learn from each other,” said Lt. Governor Becky Skillman, who gave the keynote address at the opening session. “Each of the organizations and individuals awarded today have made exceptional contributions to the communities they serve. We are pleased to honor them.”

The winners were selected by a panel of judges with expertise in the housing and community economic development fields. Nominees were judged based upon their impact, initiative, collaboration, and financial soundness and creativity in furthering the community economic development movement in Indiana.

The Indiana Association of Realtors sponsored the Governor’s Awards for Excellence in Affordable Housing, Great Lakes Capital Fund sponsored the Staff Member of the Year Award, State Farm Insurance sponsored the Key Award for Program of the Year, and the Federal Home Loan Bank sponsored the Community Spirit Award.

Because of their financial support, award recipients will receive a \$1,000 donation to the winning organizations or, in the case of individuals, a \$1,000 donation to their chosen organization in their honor. In the case of the Leadership Award, a \$2,500 donation will be made to the chosen organization of the recipients’ choice.

This years awards are:

Community Spirit Award

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Indianapolis and its Affordable Housing Advisory Council presents its annual *Community Spirit Award* to honor an individual from one of its member financial institutions who has shown an outstanding dedication to affordable housing and community economic development. Judging is based on a nominees' dedication to community, spirit and action.

The FHLBI presented this year's award to Daryl L. Crockett, Vice President, Community Development Officer at Horizon Bank in Michigan City, Indiana. Daryl has more than 37 years of banking and not-for-profit experience. His initiative and leadership have brought together many entities to fund worthwhile projects including nine low-to-moderate income housing projects in conjunction with FHLBI. Daryl's involvement with the community includes the Martin Luther King Center of Michigan City, Michigan City Boys and Girls Club, CDBG Citizens Advisory Board, Michigan City Housing Development, Michigan City Chamber of Commerce and Michigan City Exchange Club.

The IACED Staff of the Year Award

The recipient of this year's IACED's Staff of the Year Award, sponsored by Great Lakes Capital, is Susan Rinne. Susan has been described by many as a "tireless, dedicated and dynamic leader." When she took over as Executive Director of Options for a Better Living, it was known primarily as a residential provider. But Susan recognized the need for affordable housing in the Bloomington area and aggressively pursued the acquisition and rehabilitation of 12 units, which was remarkable considering her limited background in Affordable Housing experience.

Susan expanded Options' operations to increase the level of service and the number of clients the organization serves. She has greatly diversified the agency's fundraising efforts, and many of you are familiar with their very popular Options Annual Chocolate Fest and their Art of Chocolate event. Through these efforts, an endowment fund was created, allowing for the purchase and rehabilitation of several affordable duplexes.

The changes and growth experienced by Options for a Better Living is a testament to the vision, leadership, and tremendous dedication that Susan has in being an advocate for persons with disabilities, and it is for this leadership that the IACED Staff of the Year was awarded to Susan Rinne.

The IHCD Governor's Award for Excellence in Affordable Rural Housing

This year's IHCD Governor's Award for Excellence in Affordable Rural Housing was presented to LaCasa of Goshen for the Lincoln Avenue Redevelopment Project. The project involved the redevelopment of two downtown buildings that were previously used as hotels, and both were in severe need of structural repairs among many other needs. Though both provided

shelter for those who could not otherwise afford housing in the Goshen area, the buildings were eyesores in the otherwise well-kept area of downtown.

LaCasa took on the monumental task of rehabilitating the two buildings, including compiling several funding sources and working with the city of Goshen to ensure that the hotels would once again be homes to those in need of affordable housing. The project required extensive volunteer labor, including more than 14,600 hours of donated time. The LaCasa Rehab staff worked every Saturday for a year to manage the volunteers.

The Lincoln Avenue Redevelopment Project is worthy of this award for many reasons. Not only was it an extremely labor intensive rehabilitation project, it resulted in an historic showplace for the community. It was nominated because it serves as a shining example of community development at its finest – a challenging rehab, complex financing, community participation, encouragement of self-sufficiency, political support, provision of affordable housing, and an end result that the entire community is proud of.

The HCDA Governor's Award for Excellence in Affordable Urban Housing

This year's IHCD Governor's Award for Excellence in Affordable Urban Housing was presented to BRIndy for the Red Maple Grove Development in Indianapolis. Red Maple Grove is a successful model of public housing redevelopment, public-private partnerships, and mixed use infill development. What began as the redevelopment of the distressed BrokenBurr Trails public housing project on the Southeast side of Indianapolis became a beautiful new community for more than 200 families to call home.

This new community was designed for each family to have their own yard and porch, with pedestrian-friendly streets and attractive architecture, a park and a community center for all in the community to enjoy. The development includes both rental and for sale units, and serves as a national model of transformation from blight to beautiful. But the transformation was much more than just a cosmetic face lift. Crime, drug and gang activity have all significantly decreased as a result of Red Maple Grove's impact on the community. The Indianapolis Housing Agency partnered with Brinshore Development to place 18 residents in construction jobs to help rebuild their community. The Indiana Association of Realtors sponsored both of the Governor's Awards for Excellence in Affordable Housing,

The ICHHI Program of the Year Award

The ICHHI Key Award for Supportive Services Program of the Year, sponsored by State Farm Insurance, honors excellence and innovation in a service-oriented (non-construction) community development initiative. ICHHI presented this year's Key Award to Gennesaret Free Clinic for their Health Recovery Program.

Gennesaret Free Clinic offers a wide array of health services to the poor and under-insured of Indianapolis. Through hundreds of volunteer health providers and a dedicated full time administrative staff, medical, dental, pharmaceutical, vision and specialized women's preventive services are provided to over 12,000 patient visits each year. Gennesaret also serves

the poor through educational efforts, a yearly preventive health fair for the homeless and Wellness clinics for diabetes, hypertension and chronic medical problems.

Gennesaret Free Clinic locations include fully equipped medical offices in six homeless shelters and food pantry, a dental and wellness center, a mobile medical vehicle making weekly visits to a soup kitchen and a downtown street location, and transitional recuperative housing. This program provides transitional recuperative housing for homeless patients after hospitalization. Clients receive programming, services, training and housing assistance according to their individual need. The Health Recovery Program is based on a residential model with private rooms for all, and caregivers live on-site giving assistance on a 24 hour 7 day a week basis.

The Michael Carroll Community Economic Development Leadership Award

The Michael Carroll Community Economic Development Leadership Award honors an individual who has exhibited exceptional advocacy to further support the community economic development industry. ICHHI, IHCD, and IACED presented this year's Michael Carroll Community Economic Development Leadership Award, sponsored by Milestone Ventures, Inc., to Luzada Hayes.

Luzada has worked with disadvantaged persons of Evansville for the last sixteen years. She is currently the Executive Director of Aurora Inc. (formerly the Evansville Coalition for the Homeless). Luzada has been instrumental in the development and implementation of Evansville's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. She also serves on boards and steering committees for several community-based organizations and initiatives; such as, the Emergency Food and Shelter Board for Vanderburgh County, Evansville, Homeless Services Council of Southwest Indiana, Evansville Affordable Housing Trust Fund, Evansville, Vanderburgh Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence, and the Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issue.

Luzada was awarded the Sagamore of the Wabash in 2003 by Governor Joseph Kernan and the Distinguished Hoosier Award by Governor Mitch Daniels in 2007. Her commitment to ending homelessness and promoting economic development is truly an asset to the state.

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The Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority's (IHCD) mission is for every Hoosier to have the opportunity to live in safe, affordable, good-quality housing in economically stable communities. IHCD believes that growing Indiana's economy starts at home. For more information, go to www.ihcd.in.gov. For updates from Lt. Governor Becky Skillman and the agencies she oversees, please sign up at www.in.gov/lgov.